

F.C.H.

THE

X

BEAUTIES AND UTILITIES

OF

A Library:

FORMING

THE STUDENT'S GUIDE

TO

Literature, Science, and Philosophy:

AND CONTAINING

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY  
LIBRARY.

---

BY GEORGE VASEY,

*Author of "Delineations of the Ox Tribe,"—Vasey's  
"Elementary Series," &c.*

---

TORONTO:

THOMPSON & CO., PRINTERS, KING STREET EAST.

---

1857.

Se  
fr  
Co  
tin  
Co  
of

me  
in  
os  
pe  
ta  
m  
se  
th  
es

an  
m  
re  
an  
in  
th  
e  
er  
he

## INTRODUCTION.

---

The pleasures and advantages of Literature and Science have been often and eloquently set forth, even from the days of Aristotle—(himself the famous ancient Colossus of both Literature and Science)—down to the times of our own Verulam, the no less famous modern Colossus, who—(combining the fascinating familiarity of Socrates with more than the dignity of Plato)—boldly exposed the barren sophistry of the schoolmen, and pointed out the only true methods of investigation and reasoning, both in science and philosophy. Since that glorious era many a rare and able pen has felt a pride in extolling the pleasures and advantages of Literature and Science; and not only so, but many have also taken the most effectual means of disseminating and extending the opportunities of enjoying those pleasures to all sections of the community, by the establishment of public Libraries.

Books are the universal exponents of all that is great and good. If it be objected that they are also the means made use of by wicked and designing men to sap the religious and moral foundations of society, we may answer—that this objection can only apply to the fleeting and ephemeral literature of the periodical press, and the trashy novels which maintain but a short-lived existence even among the ignorant and degraded—and has no reference to those works which compose the entire bulk of either public or private Libraries. Those

who establish Libraries, either public or private, are rarely bad men ; and the worst of them would shrink from placing on the shelves of *any* Library works of an immoral or vicious character. Such works are mostly secreted away in drawers, or boxes, or dark closets ; even those persons who indulge in them are usually ashamed of them ; and after being read, they are generally destroyed.

This being the case—when we look at a great Library, we then contemplate a monument of greatness, the most perfect that human intellect and philanthropy can erect ; it is a Beauty and a Utility—whether we regard it in the light of conferring present happiness, or as promoting the progressive amelioration of human beings in future ages.

The place that does  
 Contain my books—the best companions—is  
 To me a glorious court, where hourly I  
 Converse with the old sages and philosophers.  
 And sometimes, for variety, I confer  
 With Kings and Emperors, and weigh their counsels ;  
 Calling their victories—if unjustly got—  
 Unto a strict account; and in my fancy  
 Deface their ill-placed statues. Can I then  
 Part with such constant pleasures, to embrace  
 Uncertain vanities ? No : be it your care  
 To augment a heap of wealth; it shall be mine  
 To increase in knowledge.

The following pages are devoted to a brief enumeration of the various sections of the Parliamentary Library, and to a summary analysis of its contents.

are  
ink  
' an  
stly  
ets ;  
ally  
gen-

ary,  
the  
can  
ard  
pro-  
ngs

tion  
ary,

## T H E

### BEAUTIES AND UTILITIES OF A LIBRARY.

---

#### SECTION I.

##### *Theologies, Mythologies, and Religions.*

The first section of this splendid Library contains over sixteen hundred volumes, which consist of Theology, Religions, and History of Religions, together with learned and antiquarian researches into the Religions, Mythologies, and Philosophies of the East. The importance of the present section will be at once perceived when we make the reflection, that the foundation of all *sound* morality is *true Religion*—not the Religion of forms and ceremonies—of cant and mere profession—but the Religion which is manifested by faith and good works.

It will readily be acknowledged (and almost universally)—that every question relative to the great interests of the human race should be based on Christian principles. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and *thy neighbour as thyself*. A new commandment I give unto you, saying—*Love one another*. Again,—*Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them*.

These sentiments and principles should be at the root, and in the pith of all our institutions—they should be the Alpha and Omega of all our transactions; and in no institutions should they be more conspicuous, and in no transactions should they be more blended, than in those institutions and in those transactions which are established and carried on for the formation and support of laws to regulate human conduct, and to ameliorate the condition of the helpless and unfortunate.

*Theoretically* this is universally acknowledged; but it is precisely because it is not recognized *practically* that the

wisdom of nations has failed so miserably to produce that happiness among mankind—to insure which ought to be its grand and only aim.

Every intelligent human being (but more especially such as are invested with the dignity and responsibility of legislating and governing) should be thoroughly imbued with a sincere love of their fellow men, and with a never-dying anxiety to do them every possible good.

Those legislators, who are not profoundly impressed with those sacred principles so sublimely set forth in the Divine Word, are not worthy to take upon them, nor are they capable of performing, such exalted functions as the control and government of the human family.

The entire education and training of those in power should be based on Divine Truth; and it is on this account I consider that great judgment has been shown in both the extensiveness and variety of the theological and religious department of the Library:—that no man in so elevated a position as that of law-maker should err from want of knowledge. Let him be thoroughly and practically impressed with the justice and benevolence of the *Divine Laws*, and he will never dare to enact *Human laws* of a contrary spirit,—his words will harmonize with the word of Truth, and his actions will show forth a noble example.

Here,—in the Theological and Biblical sections of this Library, is all that can be wished to delight and edify the young and aspiring politician, and to confirm and encourage the mature and experienced veteran; and not only the legislator, but the divine, the scholar, and the philosopher will find “ample room and verge enough” to gratify their most refined tastes.

The two most popular, and perhaps the two most important books in the English language, on the subject of Theology and its Philosophy, are the Natural Theology of Archdeacon Paley, written about 60 years ago, and the Physico-Theology of Derrham, written above a century ago. More recently, works of

a similar character have been brought before the public, more elaborate in their details, and exhibiting a host of new facts which recent researches and improvements in science have furnished; in addition to which they have been embellished with engravings and diagrams so as to surround this subject with an attractive halo which it never before possessed.

As a first-rate sample of the highly embellished works just referred to, I may mention those known under the name of the Bridgewater Treatises, which were presented to the world under rather peculiar circumstances; that is to say, they were prepared or "got up" according to a bequest by will of the Earl of Bridgewater, who died in 1829,—the object and scope of which Treatises were to be "the power, wisdom, and goodness of God as manifested in the Creation." Men of approved talent were to be selected, and they were to be rewarded by the sum of £1000 each for their Treatises. Volunteers were soon found to undertake this, and the following named works are the result of their labours:—

1. On the Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man; by Thomas Chalmers.
2. On the Adaptation of External Nature to the Physical Condition of Man; by John Kidd.
3. Astronomy and General Physics considered with reference to Natural Theology; by Wm. Whewell.
4. The Hand—its Mechanism and Vital Endowments, as evincing Design; by Sir Charles Bell.
5. On Animal and Vegetable Physiology; by Peter Mark Roget.
6. Geology and Mineralogy considered with reference to Natural Theology; by Wm. Buckland.
7. On the History, Habits and Instincts of Animals; by Wm. Kirby.
8. Chemistry, Meteorology, and the Function of Digestion, considered with reference to Natural Theology; by William Prout.

However, notwithstanding all these extraneous advantages, (which are, indeed, the prominent feature in these modern productions)—the books of Derham and Paley still maintain their high standing; and it may be safely said, that they have

never been surpassed in the following important items, namely, the accuracy of their facts—the appropriateness of their illustrations,—and their unanswerable logic.

Having crept through many bushels of philosophic and literary chaff (as every genuine book-worm is compelled to do) in order to discover and appropriate a very few grains of wheat,—I am enabled to lighten the labor of the young student, by directing his attention to the best and most easily accessible sources of information. And now, having invested myself with the character of an Index in this important matter, I have no hesitation in stating, that a careful perusal of the books named in the subjoined list will put the Tyro in possession of what may be denominated a “gentleman’s knowledge” of this interesting and universal topic. As a matter of course, if the student wish to obtain a critical and profound acquaintance with it, he will have to enlarge the sphere of his investigations; he will have to sift the wheat from the chaff—(or at least endeavour to do so)—of all the theological writers from Plato and Cicero down to Archbishop Whately; in fact, he will have to devote his life to the study.

But the undermentioned will be found amply sufficient for the popular reader :—

1. Derham’s Physico-Theology, or a Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, from his works of Creation.
2. Paley’s Natural Theology—with Notes, and a Discourse on Natural Theology, by Lord Brougham.
3. Harmonies de la Nature, by Bernardin de St. Pierre.
4. Etudes de la Nature, by the same.
5. Butler’s Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the constitution and course of Nature.
6. Small Books on Great Subjects—viz. :
  - Man before Christianity.
  - Man subsequent to Christianity.
  - Christianity in the 2nd and 12th Centuries; and Christian Sects in the 19th Century.
7. Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus.
8. Cave’s Lives of the Fathers.

9. Leibnitz—Essais sur la Bonte de Dieu, la Liberte de l'Homme, and l'Origine du mal.

10. Histoire de la Vie, des Ouvrages, and des Ecrits de Calvin.

---

The great Fenelon, when in company with some superficial critics, was censured for repeating himself in certain of his works. He modestly requested to have the repetitions pointed out—this was readily done. “Ah!” said he, “I perceive you recollect the passages; and that they might be recollected was my reason for repeating them.”

This anecdote refers only to particular and individual passages; but it would be well to apply it (in the instance of every good book) to the whole contents of such book. Many young students think they are acquainted with a book after a single reading: as well might an incipient musician imagine he is acquainted with an opera, on his first rehearsal. If you wish to master a piece of music, you must study it diligently, with many repetitions; just so the literary student,—if he wish to master an author, he, also, must study him diligently, with many repetitions. If a thing be worth doing, it is worth doing well. This maxim applies with the greater force, in proportion to the greater importance of the thing to be done. And what can be of more importance than the cultivation of the mind? more especially in relation to the most important of all human studies.

The books pointed out in the foregoing list, I earnestly recommend to the perusal of every one who has the least ambition to enlarge the understanding. They are adapted to the improvement of all classes of readers, whether they be under the influence of the Koran, or Veda, or Bible: Jew, Christian, Mohammedan, or Brahmin; or of any sect—Roman Catholic, Quaker, or Unitarian—Swedenborgian, Presbyterian or Episcopalian—Arminian or Socinian;—even if they be of no religious denomination whatever, or profess no creed in the world—Deist, Pantheist, or Atheist—all, all will be highly

benefitted by a diligent study of the works referred to. And, more than this, I do not scruple to assert, that no one is capable of either believing or disbelieving (in either theology or philosophy), on anything like a rational foundation, without having previously gone through the course of study which I have indicated, or some very analogous course.

---

## SECTION II.

### *Metaphysics, or Philosophy of the Human Mind.*

The next section of this Library consists of upwards of five hundred volumes on the subject of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.

From Religions and Mythologies the transition is by no means abrupt to Metaphysics—or mental and moral philosophy—a theme which, although abstruse (nay, perhaps I may say from its very abstruseness), has captivated the master-minds of every age, from the time of Homer down to the present.

Thousands of volumes have been written upon this subject, which, instead of placing it in a clearer light, have only served to envelope it in greater obscurity. Crude and imaginary speculations have usurped the place of close observation and careful experiment: and thus century after century has faded away, and metaphysics has become a by-word of reproach to its exponents. According to popular credence, this reproach remains. Metaphysics is still, by many, considered to be synonymous with nonsense. But it is not so. Metaphysics—or the study of the operations of the human mind, by an analysis of the organs and functions which subserve man's thinking and sensitive being—is of all sciences the noblest and most beautiful; it is however, at the same time, the most difficult; and it is just in consequence of this difficulty that it has been held in such contempt by the vulgar and superficial, and that its advancement has been so feeble and tardy—so that even now its very elements are only beginning to be understood.

The truth and correctness of the Newtonian system of the Universe, is not now questioned by one in a million, yet it has required centuries of investigation to establish it. Centuries of observation on the sidereal sphere had been made before the least idea of it was conceived; and when the first rude elements of a correct system were at last hit upon, they had to pass through the ordeal of centuries of opposition and ridicule—witness the struggles of Pythagoras—witness the struggles of Gallileo—witness the struggles of Copernicus. The true relation of the planetary bodies to each other have only become manifest in proportion as the mathematical sciences have been improved and made to bear upon astronomical observations.

Just so it is with the study of the human mind. It is beset with difficulties, and those difficulties have been regarded as insurmountable. Thus, although it has been frequently taken up, it has rarely been pursued; and consequently small progress has been made. It is however, the inevitable tendency of all study—(no matter on what subject)—to enlarge the capacity and strengthen the judgment; and every study has a tendency, in a greater or less degree, to develop and exhibit some peculiarity of the thinking faculty; and in this manner it is that the successful and persevering study of any branch of knowledge throws a ray of light on the *modus operandi* of the human mind.

Physiology has been of slow growth as well as mental Philosophy; it is only within the last fifty or sixty years that either of them has been successfully followed up. The philosopher had confined all his attention to mere manifestations, and results, and states of consciousness; and the physiologist had been content to plod away upon the nature of the animal functions, as exhibited by the animal organs—drawing all his conclusions from observations made at the dissecting table. But whatever may be the essence of the human mind, its phenomena are all—and invariably—manifested through the instrumentality of the animal organism; and therefore it is that a successful and correct system of Metaphysics can never

be obtained without a thorough knowledge of the corporeal mechanism ; and on the other hand, the science of Physiology can never be brought to perfection, without studying it in connection with mental phenomena. This being the case the metaphysician must become a physiologist, and the physiologist a metaphysician : it is in consequence of this having been done to some extent during the last half century that the progress of both these sciences has been considerably accelerated. The writings of such men as Sue, Destutt de Tracy, Cabanis, Bichat, Blumenbach, Muller, Abernethy, Walker, Sir Charles Bell, Professor Owen, and Todd and Bowman, furnish ample evidence of this.

The Parliamentary Library is particularly rich in this class of books, consisting of the best authors, ancient and modern, and could hardly be surpassed, for extent or choice, in either Edinburgh or Glasgow, the scene of the labours of Reid, Dugald Stewart, Adam Smith, and Thomas Brown.

The young literary student, who aspires after Philosophy, must avoid desultory reading as he would avoid a waste of time ; he must study Philosophy as a lawyer studies law—sedulously and methodically. His first book must be the *Conduct of the Understanding*, by John Locke, which will occupy him about a month ; his second will be the same author's *Essay concerning the Human Understanding*, to which he must devote two *separate* hours every day for at least twelve months. When he has made himself master of these two books, he will have laid a foundation upon which he may raise an intellectual superstructure of any magnitude whatever. But, indeed, a knowledge of Locke's celebrated *Essay*, is indispensable to any one who has the least pretension to education.

The first book, and the first and second chapters of the second book, are the most important parts of Locke's great *Essay*. They form the most unassailable portion—that portion which is, in fact, irrefragable. The principle there set forth and demonstrated, is simply thus: That there is nothing

in the intellect which was not previously in the senses ; that is to say, that no idea can enter the mind through any other avenues than those of the senses ; that no state of consciousness can be induced but by or through the medium of the external senses, nervous system, and brain. This is the grand proposition, which had, indeed, been stated and confirmed, to some extent, by the ancient philosophers in by-gone ages ; but it was reserved for an Englishman in the 17th century so to propose it, and so to surround it with Lemma, Corollary, and Scholium, as to render it for ever impregnable. It is, moreover, written in such clear and direct terms that none but those who are wilfully and obstinately perverse, or who are interested in the propagation and support of error, can even pretend to object or deny.

This portion (namely, the first book, and the first and second chapters of the second book) is decidedly the masterpiece of the Essay. Had Locke written nothing more, it would have sufficed to place his name in the highest rank of philosophers. The subsequent chapters (though generally excellent) are by no means of so high a character ; many of them still only occupy debatable ground ; and in a few instances he is inconsistent with himself, and appears to be even absolutely self-contradictory. Having made so bold an assertion, it will be indispensable that I should prove it, in order to avoid the charge of excessive presumption.

In Book II, chapter 23, he says :—“ We can’t conceive anything but impulse of body can move body ; and yet that is not a sufficient reason to make us deny it possible, against the constant experience we have of it in ourselves, in all voluntary motions which are produced in us, only by the free action or thought of our minds ; and are not, nor can be, the effects of the impulse or determination of the motion of blind matter in or upon our bodies, for then it could not be in our power or choice to alter it. For instance, my right hand writes while my left hand is still,—what causes motion in one and rest in the other ? Nothing but my will—a thought of my mind. My thought only changing, the right hand rests, and the left

*moves.* This is a matter of fact, which cannot be denied ; explain this, and make it intelligible, and the next step will be to understand creation."

The first proposition in this paragraph has the appearance of being incontrovertible. Locke evidently thought so himself. He could not have expressed it in simpler or clearer phraseology—" We can't conceive anything but impulse of body can move body." It seems to carry conviction with it. It appears, indeed, self-evident. That two and two are equal to four, does not seem to be more unquestionable than that it requires impulse of body to move body. And, indeed, the converse of this appears an impossibility—namely, that body can be moved without impulse of other body. I dwell upon this, even to prolixity, that it may be fully understood. Being thus fully convinced of the truth of this,—so fully, indeed, as not to be able to conceive the possibility of the contrary, we yet, as Locke immediately says, have daily and hourly experience of facts, which appear to be (to all intents and purposes) diametrically opposed to it. We seem to see body moved without the impulse of any other body, as in the example, given by Locke, of the motion of his hand in writing, which he says is caused by his will, a mere thought of his mind. Locke here is evidently out of his depth—he considers the matter inexplicable. Explain this, he says, and make it intelligible, and the next step will be to understand creation.

Having thus clearly and forcibly expressed himself in this place, we find him in another section of the same book as clearly asserting "that the will is nothing but one power or ability, and freedom another power or ability ; so that to ask whether the will has freedom, is to ask whether one power has another power—one ability another ability—a question at first sight too grossly absurd to require an answer ; for who does not see that powers belong only to agents, and are attributes of substances, not of powers themselves. So that this way of putting the question—whether the will be free ?—is in effect to ask whether the will be a substance or an agent?"

When we carefully compare these two passages, we perceive, that in the former he has considered the Will as the agent or subject itself; although it is obviously an abstract term, merely denoting a particular state. He appears to be thoroughly aware of this in the second passage, in which he regards it only as a power or predicate—a quality or attribute of the agent or subject. In the first passage he has ascribed so much power to volition, as to make it the very cause of motion and rest in bodies; while in the second he reduces it to its abstract condition, and treats it as a mere attribute or quality—absolutely incapable of any action or causality whatever.

It is probable that this mistake, in making volition or thought the cause of the alternate motion and rest of the right and left hands, may have arisen from the consideration of the action being the consequence, or immediately following the desire to move either of the hands, which is, in reality, taking an effect for a cause. For thought or volition, being mere predicates, or abilities, can have no power to cause either motion or rest in bodies; for thought or volition are simply the abstract names of those states or conditions which have themselves been produced in the human mind by something antecedent. Therefore to affirm that thought or will can have power to cause either motion or rest in bodies, is, in effect, to say (in the language of Locke already quoted) that one power or ability has another power or ability—which is an affirmation too grossly absurd to need an answer; for who does not see that powers belong only to agents, and are attributes of substances, and not of powers themselves.

Locke saw clearly enough that thought and volition are merely abstract terms, denominating states of consciousness, the result of previous impressions. This is, indeed, the irresistible inference to be drawn from the whole of his first book: there is nothing in the intellect which has not previously been in the senses. It is also equally true that he likewise thought he saw daily and hourly instances of facts which clearly indicated the opposite of this, as in the example given

of voluntary motion. It does not come within my present scope to attempt to reconcile this apparent contradiction. In this place, I will only add, that however specious appearances may be, we must never allow them to control or even bias our minds, if we can perceive that they are directly contrary to some really established principle, which has been demonstrated, and of which we have no shadow of doubt. What can offer a more specious objection to the truth of the solar system (as based upon our present knowledge of Celestial Mechanics) than the apparent rising and setting of the sun? To the untutored, this appearance passes for a reality; it is to them a demonstration. Just so in Ethics and Metaphysics—there are many appearances equally specious, and equally false. When we are in doubt (if the subject be important) we must investigate; and if, after patient investigation, we still be in doubt—better remain so than rashly decide. If Astronomy had to wait centuries for a solution of its important problems, is it to be wondered at that the still more subtle and difficult problems of moral and intellectual science have yet many of their solutions *in tempore futoro*?

---

The conduct of the life is always in perfect accordance with the conduct of the understanding, and the control it exercises over the feelings. The difference between a fool and philosopher,—between a savage and civilian,—between a rogue and an honest man,—between a murderer and a philanthropist,—is entirely owing to the difference which has existed between them in the education of their intellects and in the training of their feelings, as it respects both their quality and quantity. I may, indeed, go a step farther, and add, that a vast amount of the difference which exists between a handsome face and an ugly one,—between a physiognomy attractive and a physiognomy repulsive—is precisely owing to the same difference in the cultivation of the mental and moral. This will be fully corroborated by observing the superior expression of both intelligence and beauty which is apparent in individuals of

both sexes who have had their intellect well cultivated, and their manners well formed, compared with those who (unfortunately for society as well as themselves) have been neglected in these particulars.

It will thus be seen that too great importance cannot be attached to the cultivating and perfecting the study of the human mind:—that upon the teaching and training of the *inner man*, depends the form and beauty of the *outer man*;—that upon the proper treatment of human beings, in relation to their principles and sentiments, actually depends the ratio that shall obtain between moral good and evil. What is physically wrong cannot be morally right, and *vice versa*. That the moral depends upon the physical is equally true, as that the physical depends upon the moral—they are mutually dependent—they move in a circle; injure the one, the other suffers a corresponding injury.

I cannot better conclude this little exordium than by an important application of the words of Solomon—“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” The grand desideratum is, that *all* should be qualified to “train up a child in the way he should go;” but the actual fact is, that not one in ten is so qualified, and herein consists the gist of these observations. Let all at least endeavour so to educate and train themselves as to be enabled to perform this paramount duty to the rising generation; and let them not forget that this qualification cometh not but by patient, persevering, laborious study. If it be objected that there are thousands to whom this would be impossible—granted; this advice (it must be admitted) cannot be given to these; but it may be urged upon those who, through apathy or ignorance of the importance or means, neglect to improve the opportunities they possess.

In subsequent articles (in treating of the various sections of this extensive Library) I intend to present to the young scholar, and indeed to all those interested in mental culture, a list of such introductory Treatises in each department of knowledge, as will serve to convey a thorough acquaintance

with its fundamental principles ; and thus form the basis of a sound scientific, literary, and philosophical education. Having proceeded thus far, the student will then be enabled to select that department to which (from its being congenial to his nature, tastes, and prospects) he will thenceforth give a more undivided attention.

It is a much more difficult task to give a selection of authors to constitute a concise course of study on Ethical and Metaphysical Philosophy, than to give a list for a Theological course : the reason is obvious—the standards of appeal are not so settled in the former as in the latter. However, I may pretty confidently name the following, as being admirably adapted to initiate the student, and impart to him the leading features of this exalted and exalting science.

1. Archbishop Whately's System of Logic.
2. Taylor's Elements of Thought.
3. Small Books on Great Subjects :
  - Philosophical Theories.
  - Vulgar and Common Errors.
  - Connection between Physiology and Intellectual Philosophy.
4. Lewis' History of Philosophy.
5. Hamilton Edition of Reid's Philosophical Works.
6. Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind.

The Educational section of this Library will form the subject of the next article :—a subject of equal importance with that of the preceding section—of which, in fact, it is to be regarded rather as an extension or continuation than as a new or separate subject.

### SECTION III.

#### *Education—its Object and Importance.*

We now approach that department of books which treats of education—its history, statistics, and discipline ; its methods, objects, and rationale ; and above all, its advantages, consequences, and importance.

The importance of education, although often and loudly

expatiated upon, has never yet been truly felt and appreciated; and, consequently, education has never been adequately promoted and encouraged.

Everything that may be done or enjoyed—labour, study, or pleasure—is important; there is an importance in every human pursuit. But the amount of importance to be attached to each individual pursuit must be estimated according to the influence it possesses in producing and promoting human well-being; and as the grades of well-being are varicus, ascending from the lowest degrees of lethargic content and animal comfort, up, through imperceptible gradations, to the highest degrees of intellectual enjoyment,—just so will the amount of importance vary which we ought to attach to the various labours, studies, or pleasures which, in their exercise and consequences, produce those various grades of human well-being. Thus, though all pursuits are of importance, they are not all of equal importance; every pursuit having only its relative or comparative degree. When we have ascertained (as far as our faculties and means will allow) the relative importance of our various employments, studies and pleasures, it is, of course, our duty to give our attention to them in proportion to their greater or less importance—devoting our best energies to those pursuits which are of the greatest importance, and which promote, in the greatest degree, our best interests.

Many human pursuits are of little comparative value, and, consequently, of small importance; whilst many of the pursuits which strongly attract a great majority of mankind are positively injurious and degrading—to wit, all the great current vices, as well patrician as plebeian. Unfortunately the majority of mankind have strong passions and weak judgments, and consequently their estimate of the relative importance of human duties and pleasures is generally in the inverse ratio of their real value.

On the other hand, those duties and pleasures which are best adapted to promote and establish man's highest physical state, as well as his purest moral, and most refined intellectual

enjoyments, are precisely those which require the soundest judgment to appreciate and select ; and judgment is precisely that faculty of the human mind which is of the slowest growth—which requires the longest time to develope itself, and which consequently is the very last in arriving at maturity ; this, indeed, is wisdom—the highest of human attainments.

But before wisdom can be practised, science and art must be studied and applied. Wisdom (properly so called) is unknown among ignorant savages ; they lead a life of warfare, and plunder, and sensuality, and brutality—which are the very antipodes of wisdom. But when science has been studied, and art practised, then comes wisdom, which is the grand and crowning consummation—namely, the right application of science and art.

Solomon's beautiful eulogium, which is full of truth as well as poetry, deserves to be written in letters of gold in every academy and college in every land, and we might add, in every house of legislature also :

Wisdom is the principal thing ; therefore get wisdom ;

And with all thy gettings, get understanding :

Exalt her, and she shall promote thee ;—

She shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her,

She shall give to thy head a graceful ornament,—

A crown of glory shall she deliver thee.

Now the grand object of Education is the attainment of wisdom, which is, to know truly and to act justly. By a good education, and by no other means, can this be accomplished. Thus we arrive at the conviction of the immense importance of education, which, indeed, cannot be over-estimated.

The books of the Parliamentary Library, in the Educational Section, are not class-books, or text-books, or elementary treatises on the different branches of art, science, or philosophy ; but are chiefly books of advice and direction to parents and teachers, heads of schools and colleges, committees and councils, and boards of education ; and consist of the history and statistics of Colleges and other educational establishments ;—of the history and management of Literary, Scientific and

Mechanics' Institutions; reports of Boards of Education; books on the philosophy of education; on theories of education, and on the means and methods adopted at the various celebrated educational establishments for the accomplishment of the great object which they all have in view.

Of the two hundred volumes constituting this department of the Library, the following will be found to possess the greatest amount of interest to the general student. When the student becomes a Professor, he will find them all interesting.

1. Memoire sur l'instruction publique chez les anciens, et particulierement chez les Romans, par M. Naudet.
2. Locke on the education of children.
3. Col. Amoros, l'éducation physique, gymnastique, et morale.
4. Clavel A., Traite d'Education physique et morale.
5. F. D. Maurice. Has the Church or the State, the power to educate the Nation?
6. Isaac Taylor on Home Education.
7. Lectures on Education, by Whewell, Faraday, Latham and others.
8. Andrew Amos's Four Lectures on the advantage of a classical education as an auxiliary to a commercial education.
9. F. D. Maurice's Lectures on Learning and Working.
10. Small Books on Great Subjects—on the Philosophy of Ragged Schools.

The series of works under the head of "Small Books on Great Subjects," are really first-rate Treatises, produced by men who have not written their books for the purpose of becoming acquainted with their subjects, but by those who were thoroughly acquainted with their subjects before they wrote their books.

---

#### SECTION IV.

##### *Legislation and Jurisprudence.*

The next genus of books we are called upon to examine is that which takes cognizance of human action, as it regards

both its national and civic relations. This genus is divided into the following species, namely :

1. General and Foreign Jurisprudence.
2. International and Maritime Law.
3. Constitutional and Public Law.
4. Statute and Common Law of Great Britain.
5. Colonial and Provincial Law.
6. American Law, Government, and Politics.
7. French Law.
8. Ecclesiastical Politics and Law.

Legislation is the science of making laws to govern human beings, and to regulate their conduct; Jurisprudence is the science of administering those laws, or of applying them to particular cases.

That there should be so frequent a necessity to make laws, and that there should be so frequent a necessity for their administration, are simply proofs that there is something very rotten in the social fabric. Fortunately there are some few individuals—so organized—so taught—so trained—that they pass through a long life of usefulness, turning neither to the right nor to the left—but going straight forward in the path of integrity;—loving truth—doing justice; and consequently, performing all their various duties, without violating, or rendering themselves amenable to any human law whatever: these are, indeed, a law unto themselves. If a *minority* are thus “trained up in the way they should go”—why may not a *majority*?

Were the fundamental principles of justice and well-doing properly and thoroughly inculcated—were the good example invariably given;—were those principles and these examples kindly set forth and firmly enforced in daily and hourly practice;—the intellect stored with noble sentiments, and the manners formed to acts of justice and benevolence; were these teachings and trainings carried out with the same zeal and industry that are exhibited in the hoarding of lucre, or in the pursuit of enervating luxuries and degrading pleasures; were the foundations of intelligence and fine feeling timely and securely established,—then indeed might we expect,—

that peace on earth and good-will towards men, would be the general rule, instead of being, as they now are, the rare exception.

On the one hand it has been said—(and very plausibly, no doubt)—“As the institutions, so the men;” on the other hand, it has been asserted, with equal plausibility—“As the men, so the institutions.” Although these propositions appear to be the very antitheses of each other, it requires no very elaborate logic to show that there is truth on both sides. Obviously society existed before its institutions: society is the source—institutions the emanation, ergo—“As the men, so the institutions.” But a little reflection may also show us, that the institutions of a society are the offspring of the few—the most knowing and powerful;—and that the character of the great majority, who are of course ignorant, is almost entirely formed by the influence of those institutions, combined with the influence of the manners and examples of the powerful few; whose manners and example, it may fairly be presumed, will be of the same character as the laws and institutions which they themselves have constructed.

In proportion therefore, to the noble or ignoble character of the few who form the institutions; in proportion to their intelligence and honest integrity; and more especially in proportion to their acquaintance with that most important of all sciences—the science of Human Nature,—so will be the character of the great masses of mankind. We may therefore arrange or combine these two propositions thus:—“As the powerful and active few, so the institutions; as the institutions, so the ignorant and passive multitude.”

From the foregoing statements (if they be allowed to be correct), I think we are fairly entitled to deduce the following, namely, that inasmuch as the evils (*as well as the benefits*) which are current in society are generated and fostered by the institutions of that society; and inasmuch as these institutions are framed by the wisdom, and kept up by the example, of the enlightened few who possess the power,—just so are all the

evils (*as well as the benefits*) which belong to that society, to be attributed to, and charged upon, the wisdom (or the lack of it), the example, and the power of that knowing few: that is to say (briefly), that the powerful *few* who make and establish those laws and institutions which govern and form the character of the *many*, are entirely responsible for the evils resulting from those laws and institutions; that is to say (more briefly still)—the evils of society are chiefly owing to the mismanagement of the managers.

The laws of every country (almost without exception), both ancient and modern, have been founded upon false or imperfect principles—upon the narrow interests of a party or section, instead of the broad interests of the whole human family; in fact, it must not be disguised that laws, hitherto, have been framed in the supremest ignorance of the nature (physical, moral, or intellectual,) of that being to whom they were to be applied. Ignorance and barefaced cupidity (usurping the place of enlightened benevolence) have been the generating impulses; and the offspring has invariably been a hydra-headed monster, vomiting up all manner of vice and crime. Illustrations (which would be out of place here) will readily suggest themselves to the minds of all the intelligent. The present state of society will afford ample material for these illustrations, and at the same time furnish incontestible proof of the truth of our present observations.

From what has been now advanced, it will naturally be inferred that the books forming this section, namely, those on Legislation and Jurisprudence, are the least interesting portion of this great and beautiful library. Of a verity, small would be the damage, if (with a very few exceptions) the books in this department were made use of to enhance the brilliancy of the next grand exhibition of fireworks. But the intelligent Pyrotechnist might, perhaps, object to the use of them, on the ground that, from the dulness and obscurity of the ideas they contain, they would possess but a very small amount of illuminating power, if indeed they could be expected to produce anything beyond mere smoke.

The number of volumes in this section is, indeed, very great, amounting to many thousands, and forms quite a ludicrous contrast to the extreme littleness of their contents. The bindings, too, are very beautiful, increasing one's chagrin at the want of beauty so obvious within; forcibly reminding us of that remarkable fruit whose rich and glossy texture is so tempting, but whose inside is full of rottenness.

The following is a list of the exceptions already referred to, which comprises everything of interest to the general student, that is to be found in this department.

1. *De l'origine des Lois, des Arts et des Sciences, et de leurs progres chez les anciens peuples*, par A. Y. Goguet.
  2. *Esprit des Lois*—Montesquieu.
  3. *Philosophie du Droit*—Lernimier.
  4. *Legal Maxims*, classified and arranged—H. Broom.
  5. *On the Study of the law of Nature and Nations*, by Sir James Mackintosh.
  6. *The Law of Nature and Nations as affected by the Divine Law*.
  7. *De Lolme on the Constitution of England; or an account of the English Government, in which it is compared both with the Republican form, and with the other Monarchies of Europe*.
  8. *The Elements of the Art of Packing, as applied to Special Juries*—Jeremy Bentham.
  9. *The Doctrine of Equity, a commentary on the Law, as administered by the Court of Chancery*.
  10. *Defence of Usury*—Jeremy Bentham.
  11. *Medical Jurisprudence*, by Alfred Taylor.
  12. *On the law of Scotland, as applicable to Husband and Wife, Parent and Child, Guardian and Ward, Master and Servant, Master and Apprentice*.
  13. *The Constitution of the United States compared with our own*, by Tremenheere.
  14. *On Liberty and Slavery*, by Bledsoe.
  15. *The American Slave Code; its distinctive Features, Decisions, and illustrative Facts*, by Goodell.
  16. *Despotism in America, an Inquiry into the Nature, Results and Legal Basis of the Slave-holding System in the United States*, by Hildreth.
  18. Coleridge on Church and State.
  17. Baptist Noel on the Union of Church and State.
- The next subject will be that of Political and Social Science, and will open out to us an extensive field of highly interesting investigation.

## SECTION V.

*Political Economy and Social Science.*

The department of books, consisting of Political Economy and Social Science, forms a cognate *genus* with that of Legislation and Jurisprudence; but the books in the former department are incomparably superior to those in the latter—the reason of which disparity is simply this—that whereas the latter have been chiefly written by those who are interested in the abuses necessarily concomitant with class legislation—the former have been written chiefly by the philanthropist and philosopher, who have labored disinterestedly on behalf of humanity, and who are, indeed, the leaven which is destined ultimately to “leaven the whole lump.”

It is to the writings and exertions of the scientific philosopher, and the enlightened philanthropist—and *not* to the enactments of legislators or the policy of diplomatists, that we are to attribute all the blessings of civilization that we now experience; and we may with equal truth charge all those existing evils which are remediable by human means upon the ignorance and selfishness of the wealth-accumulating legislator, and the ambition and false pride of the diplomatist, who, in lieu of promoting the progress of human improvement, present, in too many instances, an inveterate and perverse opposition to all improvement save that of the balance at their bankers.

I have endeavored to show, in a former section that the morality and intelligence of the lower classes (who, of course, form the bulk of a nation), are in the direct ratio of the intelligence, morality, and institutions of the superior and powerful few; and if I am correct in the very low estimate I have taken of the legislative character, it must be quite clear to a very moderate degree of penetration, that before we can expect much amelioration in mundane affairs, we must have a vastly superior class of legislators to the one now current. Honesty and benevolence they must have, to begin with, or they will not have the desire to do good; knowledge and wisdom they

must possess in the second place, or they will not be able to select the appropriate means.

When we shall have legislators endowed with these attributes, they will doubtless perceive, that education is the grand and only lever by which humanity can be raised, and that, therefore, the promotion of the cause of education should be their first and most important object; they will thus become philosophers as well as legislators—philanthropists as well as diplomatists. The education they will insist upon (as well for themselves as for those whom they govern), will be such as to promote wisdom and goodness as much as wit and learning ; such as will produce prudence and virtue as well as teach their etymologies ; an education that will enable us to select and prefer those books which impart and instil into our minds the truest opinions and the soundest principles, rather than those that are written in the loftiest and most classic diction ; recognizing and appreciating the fact—that an industrious and virtuous education is a better inheritance than a great estate.

I have read in a book, of which I now forget the name, that—as the beautiful art of sculpture is to a block of marble, so is a good education to the human being ; the poet, the philosopher, the man of science; the good, the wise, the great—are often hid and concealed under the poor and despised plebeian: whereas, with the advantage of a proper education they would have been brought to light.

All the evils existing in society, which are the effect of human agency, either immediate or remote, may be, (in a moral point of view) divided into two great classes ; namely, those that are produced by bad or malicious feelings, and those that are simply the result of ignorance. If we desired to generalize still further we might, perhaps, be able to reduce the category to unity ; for in almost every case that we have experience of, the immediate cause of the bad or malicious feelings has been the result of a mistaken idea of the nature of some or all of the circumstances of the case upon which the ill-feeling has been exhibited ; and thus it may be said to be

the result of ignorance. But indeed, the ignorant (by reason of their ignorance, and in proportion to their ignorance) are continually inflicting evil both on themselves and others. Moreover, in the ignorance of the statesman and law-giver, it has been considered necessary in all ages of the world to coerce or cajole the ignorant. It ought, however, in this age of the world, to be clearly perceived, that the most efficient way of managing human beings, and, at the same time, the most compendious way of reforming them, is, by giving to all a good education ; this, indeed will be an effectual prevention of evil, whereas all other methods are merely palliatives.

When our Statesmen shall have cultivated with sufficient diligence the science of Anthropology, which is the most sublime science—which is, indeed, the science of all sciences—then will they perceive the necessity of applying the National Revenue to its legitimate object ; and, instead of a few paltry thousands, we shall have millions devoted to the cause of Education, and the promotion of Literature and Philosophy, which are the choicest fruits of Education. Happy will that Statesman be, and immortal will be his name, who shall take the initiative in this glorious cause.

This class of books in the Parliamentary Library is a very complete collection ; it has been selected with great liberality of sentiment and opinion, and very excellent taste. The following list contains the names of the most important works in this department, forming a little library of literature on the subjects of Political Economy and Social Science. They may be read very profitably in the order in which they are here enumerated :

1. Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinion—S. Bailey.
2. Two Treatises on Government—John Locke.
3. Passive Obedience, or the Christian Doctrine of not resisting the Supreme Power.
4. The Spirit of the Laws—Montesquieu.
5. Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations.
6. The Aristocracy of England, a history for the people—John Hampden, Jun.

7. *Sophismes Parlementaires*—Bentham.
8. *Political Essays, with Sketches of Public Characters*—William Hazlitt.
9. *Perils of the Nation; an Appeal to the Legislature, the Clergy, and the Higher and Middle Classes.*
10. Remedies suggested for some of the Evils which constitute the “Perils of the Nation.”
11. *Morality of Public Men; two letters to the Earl of Derby*—by De Vere.
12. *De la Vraie Democratic*—Bartholomew Saint Hilaire.
13. *Popular Tumults, illustrative of the Evils of Social Ignorance.*
14. *Swear not at all*—Bentham.
15. *Bacchus, an Essay on the nature, causes, effects and cure of drunkenness*—R. B. Grindrod.
16. *Dr. Carpenter on the Use and Abuse of Alcoholic Liquors in Health and Disease.*
17. *Peace—Permanent and Universal: its practicability, &c.*—Macnamara.
18. *The opinions of different authoress on the Punishment of Death*—Basil Montagu.
19. *Philosophie de l'Economie Politique*—Dutens.
20. *Economie Politique*—Destutt de Tracy.
21. *Benjamin Franklin's Essays on Political Economy and Commerce.*
22. *Natural Elements of Political Economy*—Richard Jennings.
23. *Lectures on the Nature and Use of Money*—J. Gray.
24. *Money and Morals, a book for the Times*—John Lalor.
25. *Du droit de Vivre*—par un ancien manufacturier Lyonnais.

The next section comprises Chronology, Universal History, and Philosophy of History.

---

#### SECTION VI.

##### *Chronology—History, and its Philosophy.*

Chronology is comparatively a simple and mechanical affair, involving a moderate acquaintance with mathematics and astronomy. It is the name of that branch of knowledge which treats of the various divisions of time, and the order and succession of events. The study of chronology comprises an examination of the divisions of time that have been adopted by all civilized nations; of their methods of subdividing the

year into months, weeks, days, hours, &c.; of the various eras, epochs, or periods which have been made use of in different ages and nations; and the cycles, circuits, or other periodical revolutions of years. Chronology calls in the assistance of the numismatist to decypher the dates, mottoes, legends, or other devices which are found on coins and medals. It also enlists the services of the astronomer in calculating the various eclipses which have been recorded in relation to certain events. In fact, it comprises all those researches which have for their object the adjusting and arranging of events according to the order of their succession.

The following list of books contains all that can be desired on this branch of study:—

1. Rudimentary Chronology of Civil and Ecclesiastical History, Art, Literature and Civilization, from the earliest period to 1854.—*Weale's Series*.
2. The World's Progress; a Dictionary of Dates with tabular views of General History. By G. P. Putnam.
3. Todd's Historical Tablets and Medallions, illustrative of a system of artificial memory; exhibiting a connected outline of historical and biographical chronology, &c.
4. Sir William Jones on the Chronology of the Hindus, with a supplement.
5. Syn-chronology; the History, Chronology, and Mythology of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Phœnicians, and the harmony between their Chronology and that of the Holy Scriptures.

Those who have not the means or the time to study more than one book on this subject, will find "Rudimentary Chronology," *Weale's Series*, a most excellent work. [I may here be allowed to mention, parenthetically, that the series published by Mr. Weale includes some of the best elementary treatises in the English language.]

---

#### SECTION VII.

#### *History—Political, Scientific, and Social.*

That History is not generally so interesting as several of the subjects we have passed in review, is because it has never

been treated in a manner equal to its importance. It professes to render a faithful account of all human transactions and institutions,—political, scientific, and social ; and were it to perform truly what it professes, it would be a valuable embodiment of the rationale and philosophy of these three interesting subjects—giving to each that amount of attention and elaboration which its relative importance demands. But historians in general have been carried away by the glitter and show, and pageantry and ostentation, of the events connected with the political sphere, because of their noise, and bustle, and flashy externals ; courts—embassies—camps—battles—conquests. The whole resources of science, and the blood and muscle of the great body of each nation have been made subservient to the contentions of great rival powers ; and the historian has too often mentioned science and “the people” as merely subsidiary and accessory to the pride and pomp of crowns and sceptres.

Thus the great triumphs of science, and the social history of the people have been almost entirely ignored. For one volume that has been written to record the discoveries and progress of science, or social amelioration, there have been a hundred written to trumpet forth the glory of combats, and sieges, and spoliations.

But this is absolutely reversing these subjects in the order of their importance ; for who does not see that the prosperity and happiness of a people, and the progress of science, are of infinitely more importance than all the affairs of diplomacy that were ever transacted, added to all the battles and conquests that were ever recorded. To remember the various discoveries of science that have been made in ancient times, is obviously of the greatest importance. To remember, and have continually placed before us, the various resources and arrangements for the production of domestic and social felicity, is also of the utmost importance. But that we should recollect that such a battle was fought at such a time, and that such a number were slain on either side,—that such a general or such a king won that battle—that such a number

were made prisoners, who were either shot after the battle, or reduced to slavery, to satisfy the revenge, or add to the luxury of the conqueror—Is it of the least importance that such horrors should be had in remembrance? I imagine enlightened benevolence will at once answer—decidedly not. Would it not be infinitely preferable that the memory of all such transactions should be obliterated for ever? Should we not gladly rather drink of the Lethean cup, in regard to all such abominations? Would it not be better far to begin, *de nouveau*,—to turn over a fresh leaf—to commence a new page of history—unstained by such sanguinary records? I have always had a supreme contempt for all such details. I pride myself, at this moment, in not knowing the history or details of a single battle that ever was fought; and so far from this ignorance being any loss to me, I look upon it as a decided gain. Those who have devoted themselves to the study, and have got possession of those histories and details, have, of course, used up a considerable amount of time in the acquisition of them, which, undoubtedly, they might have spent in acquiring knowledge of a much superior character. To take up with an inferior acquisition when you might have a superior one at the same cost, is evidently a decided loss, equal in amount to the difference in the value and importance of the respective acquisitions.

When history comes to be written with judgment and taste—illustrated by the lives of great and good men—enriched by the never-ceasing discoveries of science, and replete with the golden precepts of “divine philosophy”—it will then be as entertaining as a fairy tale, and as instructive as the fountains of wisdom.

The Parliamentary Library contains a very superior collection of books in every department of ancient and modern history, amounting to several thousand volumes. Mr. Todd has shown his extensive knowledge of books, and excellent judgment in their selection, which offers a rich treat to the diligent and critical student.

The works named in the following list, will impart as complete a knowledge of this important subject as the general student will require.

1. Tytler's Universal History, from the Creation of the world to the beginning of the eighteenth century.
2. Tytler's Elements of General History, ancient and modern, continued to the death of William IV.
3. Ramsay's Universal History Americanized ; from the earliest records to 1808 ; to which is annexed a brief view of history, from 1808 to the Battle of Waterloo.
4. View of the World ; a delineation of the natural and artificial features of each country, and a narrative of the different nations, their revolutions and progress, by John Bigland.
5. Bell's New Pantheon ; or an Historical Dictionary of the Gods, Demigods, Heroes, and fabulous persons of antiquity, with their temples, priests, altars, oracles, &c.
6. Neibuhr's Lectures on Ancient History : the History of the Asiatic Nations—the Egyptians, Greeks, Macedonians, and Carthaginians.
7. Neibuhr's Lectures on Ancient Ethnography and Geography, comprising Greece and her colonies, Epirus, Macedonia, Illyricum, Italy, Gaul, Spain, Britain, North of Africa, &c.
8. Life and actions of Alexander the Great, by J. Williams.
9. Life and actions of Pompeii.
10. Secret Societies of the middle ages.
11. W. F. P. Napier's History of the War in the Peninsula, and the South of France.
12. The Gael and Cymbri ; or the origin and history of the Irish, Scots, Britons and Gauls, and of the Caledonians, Picts, Welsh, Cornish, and Bretons, by Sir William Betham.
13. The Pictorial History of England, being a history of the People as well as a History of the Kingdom ; by George L. Clark and Charles Macfarlane ; from B. C. 55 to A. D. 1820.
14. Index to the same, forming a chronological key to events, the Lives of remarkable persons, and the Progress of the Country, by H. C. Hamilton.
15. Continuation of the same during the 30 years Peace from 1815 to 1846, by H. Martineau.
16. Lives of John Pym and John Hampden.
17. Life of Oliver Cromwell, *vide* Forster's British Statesman, vols. 6 and 7.
18. The Comic History of England, by Gilbert A. Becket, with engraving by Leech.
- [N. B. In this *Comic History*, there is much matter for serious reflection.]

20. Thomas Moore's History of Ireland from the earliest times to the year 1646.
  21. The Land we Live in; a Pictorial and Literary Sketch of the British Empire, published by Charles Knight.
  22. Paris; its historical Buildings and its Revolutions, revised to the present time—1849.
  23. Memoir of the Life of Peter the Great.
  24. India: Cries to British Humanity, relative to the Suttee, Infanticide, Idolatry, Ghaut Murders, and Slavery, with Hints for the melioration of the state of society in British India—by J. Peggs.
  25. The Thugs: Illustrations of their History and Practices; and Proceedings for the suppression of the crime of Thuggee.
  26. History of Java, by Sir T. S. Raffles.
  27. History of Sumatra; of the Government, Laws, Customs, and Manners of the native Inhabitants, by William Marsden.
  28. Les Harvis de l'Egypte and les Jongleurs de l'Inde. Theodore Pavie.
  29. Australia, Tasmania, &c., their rise, progress, and present state.
  30. Polynesian Mythology, and ancient traditional history of the New Zealand Race.
  31. Ellis's Polynesian Researches, during nearly eight years on the Society and Sandwich Islands.
- 

#### SECTION VIII.

##### *The Philosophy of History.*

It is a rare qualification in a Naturalist to be able to describe accurately and intelligibly the conformation and peculiarities of a plant or an animal; but it is one of the rarest qualifications in the world to be able to relate the particulars of an event exactly as they occurred. When we consider that History takes cognizance of the moral and intellectual character of the individuals engaged in the events which it describes,—the various interests and motives which influenced these individuals—the antecedent circumstances which led to those events,—the numerous collateral incidents which took place simultaneously with those events, and the consequences resulting from all those combinations:—when we have taken all these circumstances into consideration, we cannot too highly estimate the difficulty involved in the task of those who have

undertaken the duties of the Historian; and we need scarcely be surprised at the very few instances which have appeared of those who have prosecuted this task successfully.

An anecdote is related by Sir Walter Raleigh, which will in some degree illustrate this matter:—This celebrated courtier was one day seated in a window in his house in London, when a skirmish took place in the street exactly opposite his house, which was followed by the arrest of some of the most active parties concerned. Sir Walter saw the whole affair from his window directly above the scene of action. Immediately after the melee was over, two or three of Sir Walter's friends, who had also witnessed the affair, called in to see him, and each gave a detail of the most prominent circumstances: singular to relate, their accounts differed very materially from each other in the majority of the particulars; and Sir Walter's version of the matter differed in an equally remarkable degree from the whole of them!

Now, if it thus appears, that from eye-witnesses of the facts, (and that, too, immediately after the occurrence) we find it impossible to obtain more than a very brief and imperfect account—what degree of accuracy and minuteness can we expect from a recital of those events which have taken place in distant countries, at remote periods: and frequently on no more foundation than mere hearsay? Yet such is the material of which a great part of history, both ancient and modern, is composed. It therefore behoves us to be extremely on our guard, in the study of history, and not to take for granted, whatever may be set down; we must make every page of history a lesson whereon to exercise our judgment in determining what to accept and what to reject.

If we may be allowed to regard history in the light of a science, and compare it with the physical sciences, we shall discover a remarkable difference between the former and the latter. The physical sciences are made up of never-ceasing facts, which can always be appealed to, and of which experiment can be made at any time; and these experiments can be

repeated and re-repeated, until we arrive at satisfactory evidence of the truth; but with respect to history—the facts have passed away, leaving no vestige behind, and can never be recalled. Again—the facts of science can be brought into material relation with the senses; but the facts of history can only be seized by the imagination, and retained by the memory. Thus, we perceive that there is an important distinction between the evidence which is presented by the facts of physical science, and the evidence which is presented by the records of past events; in physical science it amounts to a certainty—in historical records, it only amounts to certain degrees of probability.

In estimating the truthfulness of history, and the degree of reliance we may rationally place on its details, there are two farther considerations which must also be particularly attended to; In the first place, we must enquire, are the facts recorded consistent with the nature of things? Are they in accordance with the *lex naturæ*? Are they within the sphere of possibility? Secondly, were those individuals (who have taken upon themselves the duties of historians) intellectually qualified for their tasks? Had they the means of gaining the necessary information? Were they men of integrity, and free from prejudice? The facts and events related, although very possible,—are they, at the same time, very probable? We cannot read history with much advantage, unless we take all these points into careful consideration. The application of the foregoing remarks are, of course, strictly confined to the records of profane or secular history.

How much soever history may present us with heroes in all respects fitted to “adorn a tale,” it will have failed in its most important object, if it do not also present, in the most prominent manner, heroes who are qualified “to point a moral.”—We are not satisfied with knowing the history of kings and warriors—legions and cohorts—we desire to have the history of the employments and enjoyments of all classes of men, from the King to the beggar; and in our eager pursuit of knowledge we may be all allowed to ask—What is the difference between

a king and a beggar? and why do beggars exist at all? Is beggary an evil? If it be, does it admit of a remedy? and this naturally prompts us to inquire after the cause. It will be the duty of the faithful historian to inquire into the cause and origin of this evil, if it be one; and we may humbly suggest to said historian, that the best (if not, indeed, the only) method of tracing this evil to its source, will be to write a very minute and careful history of the lives of the two characters which constitute the two extremes of our social scale, namely: the king and the beggar;—to dwell particularly upon their parentage, birth, and education; and most particularly upon the history of their progenitors during the decade of lunar periods immediately antecedent to their nativity. It has been frequently remarked,—and is looked upon by many as quite an axiom—that extremes meet: how far this may be the case in the present instance, we will leave to the writer of history to decide.

But to return to beggary: that it is an evil, few will be inclined to dispute, and when the faithful historian shall have pointed out the cause, it will be the duty of the honest legislator to apply the remedy—by removing the cause. We heartily wish them both—God speed!

The books, whose names are hereto appended, will introduce the student to the mysteries and attractions of this highly interesting and important subject:—

1. *Essai historique et philosophique sur les noms d'hommes, de peuples, et de lieux*, par Eusebe Salverte.
2. *Du mouvement des races humaines*, par A. Esquiro.
3. *De la destinee des villes*, par St. Marc Girardin.
4. *History as a Condition of Social Progress*, a lecture by Samuel Lucas.
5. *Bunsen's Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History applied to Language and Religion*.
6. *Schlegel's Philosophy of History in a course of Lectures*.
7. *Essai sur le principe et les limits de la philosophie de l'histoire*.

**P A R T   I I**

WILL COMPREHEND THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS:

1. Biography.
2. Heraldry and Genealogy.
3. Voyages and Travels.
4. Natural Philosophy and Chemistry.
5. Mathematics.
6. Natural History.
7. Geology, Mineralogy, and Palæontology.
8. Anthropology and Zoology.
9. Botany, Agriculture, and Horticulture.
10. Medical Sciences.
11. Fine Arts and Architecture.
12. Useful Arts and Manufactures.
13. Philology, Criticism, and Rhetoric.
14. Classics, Poetry, and the Drama.
15. Bibliography.

*Une œuvre pour le 2<sup>e</sup> partie  
qui a été publiée —*